

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Representative Wally Herger (CA-02) today responded to a report by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on rising health care costs. CMS economists predicted that Americans' health care costs will double to more than \$4 trillion per year by 2017, constituting approximately 20% of the U.S. economy. Health care spending per person is expected to increase from an average of about \$7,000 today to about \$13,000 in ten years. Herger had the following reaction to the report:

"The new CMS study confirms what many Americans already know: Health care costs are rising at an alarming rate. This out-of-control inflation threatens to overwhelm middle-class families, businesses, and the federal and state governments alike. In fact, in a recent survey, Americans named rising costs as the number one problem facing our country's health care system.

"This report should serve as a call to action for Congress to pursue responsible and common-sense solutions for skyrocketing health care costs. As we debate how to provide access to health care for the 47 million Americans who are uninsured, we must keep in mind that no system of coverage will be sustainable if we fail to rein in underlying health care costs.

"The performance of the new Medicare prescription drug program, where premiums have actually gone down, demonstrates that competition and consumer choice can be a powerful force to reduce costs. Congress should promote similar competition across the entire health care system, as well as encouraging innovative approaches to health care delivery that will allow Americans to access high-quality care at lower cost."